

Presentation of *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century (French Edition)*

par **Robert Faurisson**

For Arthur Butz, the author of *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century*, the alleged physical extermination of Europe's Jews during the Second World War constitutes one might justly call a historical lie, a myth, an imposture or, as he puts it, a hoax. In France and in quite a few other countries this hoax has become an official truth, protected by the police, the judicial system and, above all, by the omnipotent mass media. It has taken on the character of a religious belief, a social prohibition, a taboo. "The kosher account of the Second World War," as it may also be called, is the only version allowed in schools, universities, the book trade, law courts, the press, the cinema or on television. The "Holocaust" or "Shoah" has become a religion, a business, an industry.

The writers and scholars who are known as revisionists contend that the Germans, in fact, never exterminated, or sought to exterminate, the Jews. They further contend that the Germans neither built nor used gas chambers or gas vans to kill Jews. Based on their research, the revisionists conclude that the number of European Jews who actually perished between 1939 and 1945 as a consequence of the war, together with those who died of hunger or disease, - notably in outbreaks of typhus (which was nearly endemic in eastern Europe) - certainly did not reach the extravagant figure of six million but, more likely, about one million, all in the course of a conflict that claimed tens of millions of lives. As in any modern war, civilians were as severely affected as soldiers. Children paid a heavy toll. Many Jewish children died, while at the same time many German and Japanese children were atrociously killed in flames of phosphorous or nuclear explosion. It has become commonplace to mention that entirely innocent Jewish children were deported *because they were Jewish*. On this score, and using the same turn of phrase, it should be noted that entirely innocent German and Japanese children were killed *because they were German or Japanese*.

During the 1950s and 1960s, the most prominent revisionist was the Frenchman Paul Rassinier. (He died in 1967.) Although he studied certain aspects of the Great Lie, he lacked either the will or the time to present a comprehensive analysis of this subject. All the same, his works and his struggle are worthy of admiration.

It was in 1976 that the American Arthur Robert Butz published the awaited comprehensive analysis. This work is so powerful that still today it deters other revisionists from attempting to produce a comprehensive study of his own that might compare with the "masterstroke" of *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century*. Let us add, for good measure, that the first successor of Arthur R. Butz is Arthur R. Butz himself. In effect, the texts that he has since published on certain particular aspects of the question complement, piece by piece, his masterwork. Perhaps the best proof that *The Hoax* has been, since 1976, a durable overall evaluation is the fact that each of the author's later essays naturally fit with the basic construction; none of the additions compels a modification of the general structure, either of the argument or of the book.

It took an exceptional mind and character to confront and fell the monstrous taboo.

Arthur Butz has, all at the same time, the mind of a scientist, of an analyst of texts and of a historian. By training he is a scientist; his specialty is advanced information technology. In the analysis of texts, he is not really a specialist, although an information scientist will often have to analyze texts or documents. Finally, he is not a professional historian - as he makes a point of underscoring - but experience has proven that, on the perilous ground that he has chosen, he can put to shame or bring envy to all those persons, academics or not, who happen to be professional historians and who, for the most part, have kept quiet and let the historical imposture proliferate.

As for Butz's character: it is, rather distinctively, that of a man able to set out on the most daunting of missions with moderation, prudence and wisdom.

The sum of knowledge that he acquired in about five years in order to accomplish his work is, in itself, impressive. He succeeded in putting this rich mass of data in order. He has a talent for demonstration. He knows the art of persuasion. Not for nothing has Pierre Vidal-Naquet dubbed Butz "the foremost and cleverest revisionist," adding:

[...] if a prize for mendacity were to be given, I would say that Butz's tome, *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century*, represents, at times, a rather hair-raising success: the reader is persuasively led by the hand and brought little by little to the idea that Auschwitz is a tendentious rumor that skillful propagandists have gradually transformed into a truth. Such are the "good tidings" whose clumsy evangelist Faurisson has become. It is Butz and not he who might be defined in Zola's terms as the "diabolical craftsman of the judicial error." Ought one to refute Butz? It would be possible, of course, and even easy, assuming one knew the archives, but it would be long and tedious [...] When a fictitious account is well prepared, it does not contain elements allowing one to destroy it on strictly internal grounds.

One is tempted to compare Butz to the best of all possible guides for a journey of exploration into a particularly hostile world. He knows the territory. Even so he advances only with caution, with measured steps, as if, progressively, he were discovering this territory along with us. Often he halts his advance and takes stock. Before starting off anew, he once again consults map and compass. Yet again he examines the surroundings, foreseeing the pitfalls, anticipating our apprehensions, never eluding our questions or objections, which, moreover, he had obviously foreseen. To these his response is either immediate or deferred; in the latter case, he promises to answer later on and, in effect, the answer comes in due course. At the end of each leg of the journey - of each page or set of pages - we seem to hear his voice murmuring in our ear: "I believe we're making headway. Turn again towards the obstacle that looked threatening. We've overcome it. You thought you were lost in the darkness and fog: look! The fog is lifting and the horizon is coming into sight!" At the end, when the adventure - or the reading - is over this guide, wise and prudent, soberly takes leave of us. In a few sentences the summary is made, and we can then note that the promise has been kept. In a brief statement at the start of the adventure, he had unaffectedly announced what we were setting out to discover; at journey's end, he gives us a short reminder of that introduction and is content to add just a word or two. And that is all. But let us take a closer look.

The title and, in later editions, the subheading of his book (*The Case Against the Presumed Extermination of European Jewry*), have the same American frankness as a sentence in chapter III: "The thesis of this book is that the story of Jewish extermination in World War II is a propaganda hoax". In chapter I, in a tone just as blunt, he had written "The simplest valid reason for being skeptical about the extermination claim is also the simplest conceivable reason: at the end of the war they were still there."

At the very start, in the first lines, the author had made his bid and, at the end of the book, he is there to remind us of it. In a way, it's like he were declaring: "This version, so widespread, of the Second World War is a tissue of lies. It is nothing but a variation on the outlandish Jewish stories that make up the Talmud." Those who promote the rabbinical version of Second World War history dare to present the fate of the Jews as that of an exceptional people whose god, incredibly perverse, had chosen to subject them to exceptional suffering; to do so, this perverse god allegedly decided to hand over his "chosen people" to satanic forces, those of German National Socialism. These Talmudisms are but phantasms. They are not history: they are mere stories. More precisely, they are stories like those that were already to be found in abundance in the Old Testament. And with such fabrications, even in the absence of any foul intent, it is seldom that money and publicity are not made.

On the final page Butz mentions the 1952 "Treaty of Luxembourg," by which the Bonn government made colossal financial "reparations" to the Jews because of the "unspeakable criminal acts" supposedly committed by the Third Reich against the children of Israel; these "reparations," it may be noted, are set to continue until the year 2030, and constitute but a fraction of what German taxpayers and German businesses disburse to Shylock. Butz concludes that his book has shown those alleged crimes to be "largely a hoax and, specifically, a Zionist hoax." He is not one to think "Jewish" and write "Zionist". If he means to call "the Jews" into question, he will say "the Jews", and if he means "the Zionists", he will write "the Zionists". But - and this is one of his most clear-cut demonstrations - he proves to the reader that the "Holocaust" myth was chiefly forged and launched by specifically Zionist circles. He demonstrates as well that the judicial masquerade of the Nuremberg trial was rather less a creation of the United States government or of prosecutor Jackson than of influential personalities who were Zionists and not simply Jews. Our American draws the logical conclusion that, since there was a Zionist hoax followed by a swindle, the State of Israel "owes Germany a lot of money," as he, a man of understatement, puts it.

One may imagine that a Frenchman or a European will find this American frankness a bit curt but, in Butz's case, that tone is perceptible only at the beginning and at the end of his discourse. Nearly the whole of the rest of the book bears, on the contrary, the features of a slow and serene exposition.

The work of this revisionist of ours is an undertaking of demolition and construction.

Butz kills the "Holocaust" myth and even, to borrow a word from cold-war parlance, "overkills" it. He razes to its foundations an edifice of lies, each of which is more absurd and dangerous than the rest. Furthermore, he sketches in broad outline the real wartime experience and suffering of Europe's Jews. He recalls the measures taken by the Germans with respect to a minority whom, often rightly, they deemed hostile, at times even considering them as a bel-ligerent, and whose resources on a global level boded ill for Germany. He portrays the reality of a policy aiming at a "territorial final solution" (*territoriale Endlösung*) of the eternal "Jewish question" (*Judenfrage*). This solution meant finding a territory (other than Palestine) for the Jews of the entire world: the island of Madagascar had been seriously considered before the outbreak of war. It was foreseen that this relocation would allow for a "Jewish renewal" after the inevitable hardships endured, but the project was rendered impossible by the new world war's progressively tragic development. The author evokes the reality of the "provisional" solutions, which involved the confinement of Jews in ghettos or, sometimes, in concentration camps, transit centers or forced labor camps. He constantly keeps in mind a truth so elementary that it tends to be forgotten: "There was a war going on during World War II." This turn of phrase, intentionally tautological, is rich in meaning. It is by effectively disregarding the war and its necessities that the Reitlingers, Hilbergs and Dawidowicz have succeeded in giving a completely false portrayal of the Germans' treatment of the Jews from 1939 to 1945. Those Shoatic writers have not noticed, or have not cared to notice, that the first and foremost preoccupation of Germany's wartime decision makers was with winning the economic and military war, and not with assailing the Jews. The principal measures adopted concerning the Jews were based primarily on the need to ensure the safety of German soldiers and civilians during a time of "total war," and by the vital need to procure as abundant a workforce as possible. Subsequently, if the authorities in charge of the camps that lodged those Jews, together with non-Jews, built crematoria there, it was because of the epidemics that had struck both Germans and members of their workforce, whether Jewish or non-Jewish. It is incredible that those orthodox authors do not even mention the epidemics as the reason for the construction of the crematoria. Finally, to speak of war is to speak of "the horrors of war." In that war, in that crusade, which so many of them had wanted, the Jews suffered their share of its horrors. As they were not the only ones to suffer from the effects of the Second World War, it is absurd, for a historian of the "Holocaust," to fail to fully refer to that war, which claimed the lives of so many others, including the many who, in the defeated nations, fell victim well after their defeat. "Auschwitz" cannot be judged equitably by isolating that camp as if it were located on Mars, but rather by locating it within the history of the war as well as within the history of all concentration camps - German, British, French, American, Soviet or others - before, during and since the period 1939-1945. A judeocentric and fixated vision of the history of the Jews will never allow us to understand this part of human history.

Arthur Butz's analytical capacities are, of course, obvious - but what is most striking is his global approach: he never fails to see the forest for the trees. The meaning of the word "context," unfortunately so overused, has become so extended that today it too often covers particularly vague considerations, quite removed from the word or subject being studied. By "context" our author, for his part, that word means before anything else that which is closest to the object of his analysis. In the first place, it is for him a question of the immediate context (for instance the terms that flank the word being studied); then, step-by-step, it is also a question of the facts, persons and period under consideration, with a full inventory thereof. One may, by way of example, read the staggering Appendix E on "The role of the Vatican." A stream of studies have been published devoted to the controversy of what is called "the silence of Pius XII" on the "Holocaust." Let us invite the authors of such studies to read this chapter. In doing so they will realize that they have lacked the analytical acumen or the global approach that has allowed Butz, a non-professional historian, to solve the false enigma of that silence. For if Pius XII kept quiet, during and even after the war, about the extermination of the Jews and the gas chambers, it is because the latter did not exist and because, at the very least, the Pope had doubts about their existence, a fact that suffices to make him a "revisionist" in his own fashion. It is normal to keep quiet about what has not existed, and even about what *cannot* have existed. If a crime appears to belong, either with certainty or probably, to the realm of fiction, one does not come out and denounce it as though it had really occurred, for to accuse someone of a crime that has not occurred is to lie and to slander, and, when the accused has just been defeated in a war, it is to dishonor oneself. In this matter, Pius XII wanted neither to lie, nor to slander anyone, nor to dishonor himself.

In the same manner by which he sometimes steers his reasoning, Butz progresses with such scholarly deliberation as to leave some readers disconcerted. "Where is he taking us?" they may ask themselves. "What is the meaning of this passage that has all the appearances of a pure digression? When will we get back to the main thread of the argument?" The American reader will grumble, if his habitual reading is in the comfortable pages of the "digests." The French reader, who likes things lively, will moan. Both will be wrong. Our man, for his part, knows that "he who goes slowly goes surely." Besides, Butz is armed with the potent Anglo-Saxon sense of humor that can well stand a certain plodding unbearable to the Latin temperament.

Let us take one example of this long and slow reasoning that, in 1975-1976, led the author to a particularly bold conclusion, and see in what providential form an event that occurred a few years later, in 1979, came to provide a spectacular confirmation of Butz's dialectical genius.

A section toward the end of chapter II is devoted to the industrial role of Auschwitz, in which the author holds forth at some length on technical considerations of synthetic oil and rubber. When he does not speak of "polymerization" or "vulcanization", he instructs us on "butadiene" and "sodium." The reader may begin to worry and ask himself whether this Butz is not a stuffed shirt, whether he has not gotten hold of a volume full of that supreme brand of foolishness: academic or polytechnic twaddle, more asinine than an ass. Has he just come face to face with one of those pedants who master a subject so poorly that they have to make a display of their borrowed wisdom? Not the case at all, as we shall be seeing.

The start of the following chapter deals with the United States rubber crisis of 1942. On December 7, 1941, most of the American Pacific fleet at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, was suddenly destroyed. As a result, the Pacific Ocean became a Japanese sea. Overnight the Americans thus saw their rubber route from Malaya and the East Indies cut off. It was an emergency that called for immediate research into the making of synthetic rubber. But which country was, at the time, the most advanced in the world in this field? The answer: Germany. And, the author asks himself, at which spot in Germany had such research been most extensively pursued? The answer, this time, is Auschwitz. It was at Auschwitz, a town in Upper Silesia (annexed by Poland after the war), that a large industrial complex was located at which the Germans were producing synthetic gasoline, and trying to set up similar production of a synthetic rubber substance called "buna" (a compound word derived from "butadiene" and "Na", the chemical symbol for the element sodium).

It is then that Butz has the daring to conclude that the Americans certainly must have paid the fullest attention to Auschwitz both for the manufacture of synthetic gasoline and for the efforts to make synthetic rubber. Going still further in his daring, he provides a lengthy exposé on aerial photography for surveillance or espionage. He ventures that, given the quality of aerial photographs at the time, the American intelligence agencies, in their desire to know what in fact was going on at Auschwitz, logically must have resorted to this source of information in addition to all the other intelligence-gathering means at their disposal. He adds that, up to now (1975), those photographs have not yet been made public. He concludes that, if, in that camp, in 1942, there had really been set in motion an abomination exceeding all standards of horror, and if such an extraordinary scheme as an industrial program of physical extermination of the Jews of Europe were really being carried out, then the American army's intelligence branch would not have failed to learn of it. To complete the author's thought at the time, let us mention that what he says here of 1942 applies, even more, to the years 1943 and 1944. If, during the war, the aerial photographs had corroborated the rumor of the existence and operation of enormous "death factories", they would inevitably have been published. If, 30 years after the war they were still being kept secret, it was because they did not corroborate the rumor.

In February 1979, almost three years after the publication of his book (which had prompted major consternation, notably within America's Jewish community), Butz had the satisfaction of seeing the CIA finally bring out aerial photographs of Auschwitz! Those photographs proved that Auschwitz had never been anything but a complex of concentration camps near which the Germans developed a vast industrial complex. There was nothing at all special about the crematoria buildings. They were surrounded by lawns in good condition, neatly laid out and showing no sign of the trampling by those crowds of people who, it is claimed, regularly waited there before entering the structures in order to be gassed, and then incinerated. No waiting queues were to be seen in the vicinity. Nor was there the least trace of the great heaps of coal or coke that would have been needed to cremate, we are told, thousands of victims per day. In particular, two of those structures, far from being concealed, were situated just near the internees' soccer field. The photographs showed when and how the vast industrial zone had been bombed by Allied aircraft, and why the camps themselves had not been targeted. If the latter had been intentionally bombed, the inmates would have been killed in great numbers precisely because they were "concentrated" there, and the survivors would no longer have had dormitories, latrines, showers, laundries, cookhouses, infirmaries or shelter. With the crematoria destroyed, the corpses would have stayed lying on the ground in an area where, the water table being very high, burial was impracticable. Typhus would then have doubled its toll. (It was to be discovered, in the end, that the Allies carried out a total of 32 aerial reconnaissance missions over Auschwitz between December 27, 1943, and January 14, 1945.)

This release of the aerial photographs confirmed Butz's thesis, and all the more as in 1979 the two authors of the publication bearing the images adorned them with arrows pointing to the location of the "undressing room[s]" (*sic*) and the "gas chamber[s]" (*sic*). Any reader endowed with a minimum of analytical sense could only laugh aloud at the naiveté or deviousness of those two CIA men. In the end, Butz had been so right that his adversaries were reduced to retorting, as we see, with pure childish tricks.

The author has shown the same clear-sightedness on a good number of other subjects. At a conference in 1982 he presented a paper whose text is given in the present volume, a detailed exposé in which he enumerates a series of simple observations that happen to fortify his thesis. But, in a preamble, he has the judicious idea to bring up, as a precedent in the history of great hoaxes, the text of the "Donation of Constantine," purportedly discovered in the Ninth century. He does so to describe how an enormous historical fraud, one of capital importance for the papacy, was finally exposed in 1456 by the humanist Lorenzo della Valle (*Contra donationis, quae Constantini dicitur, privilegium ut falso creditum est et ementitum, declamatio*). The emperor Constantine, promulgator, in 313 AD, of the edict of Milan, had, in reality, never donated the Roman Empire to the papacy. The text of the donation was merely a fake, and, for that matter, a thoroughly crude one. No sensible person should be taken in by historical lies of this kind, but nonetheless they endure because society or the powers that be need them; once that need is no longer felt, they may disappear. Moreover, Butz reminds us, the man who endeavors to expose such a lie often accumulates a mass of arguments of disparate value even though a few precise arguments would suffice. After this lengthy introduction, he returns to the heart of the matter. He lists the simple reasons - there are eight - why the alleged extermination of the Jews cannot have happened. To sum up: if, in the middle of Europe, in the space of three years, the Germans had killed so many millions of Jews, such an extraordinary phenomenon could not have gone unnoticed. But the Vatican did not perceive this awesome occurrence. The International Committee of the Red Cross did not see it. The German underground opposition did not mention it. The European Jews had no information on the subject and did not truly believe the vague, absurd and cacophonous rumors circulating here and there of a physical extermination of industrial proportions. Jews overseas (United States, Palestine, international Jewish organizations) did not behave as if they themselves lent credence to the alarming accounts that they were disseminating, and nor did the Allied governments. It is here that Butz inserts what may be called his parable of the miraculous elephant, which deserves to be quoted:

It is demanded that we believe that these "events continental in geographical scope, of three years in temporal scope, and of several million in scope of victims," all transpired without one relevant party being cognizant of them. It is like telling me that, while I saw no elephant when I looked in my basement, he was there anyway. Also while I was sitting in my living room I did not notice that the elephant managed to come upstairs and romp about a while, relevant stairways, door openings, and floors having suddenly miraculously become compatible with such activities. Then the elephant dashed outside into a busy mid-day shopping district, and then walked several miles back to the zoo, but nobody noticed.

In conclusion, if the genocide of the Jews had happened, at least eight authorities or agencies would not have failed to notice it; none of them noticed it; therefore that genocide cannot have happened. To persist in believing in its reality would be like lending credence to the eight enormities contained in the tale of that elephant. A brief tale that says more than a long speech!

The Hoax has suffered from imperfections. To begin with, the first edition was presented in an unprepossessing layout. For want of money, low quality paper had to be used, the composition had to be too compact and the type too small. The mass of text appeared all the harder to take in as there were too few subheadings. There was nothing in the way of signs or markers to guide the reader and make easier his progress through the exposition. The style was lacking in polish and the vocabulary lacked finesse; the author, for his part, agrees, as will be seen in his preface to this French edition, which, incidentally, is the first to carry subheadings in sufficient number.

Butz terms his analysis "horizontal" as opposed to the "vertical" analysis conducted by other revisionists. He means, rightly, that he has held the whole of the subject under his gaze whilst others have taken into consideration only certain aspects of it. As concerns, for example, the alleged Nazi gas chamber, he admits that, in his book, that aspect of the "Holocaust" has not got much attention. He goes so far as to say that those who are interested in that question could skip his book. At the same time, he does not imagine that a serious person can venture into the controversy of the gas chambers without having first taken, through his book, a general view of the revisionist interpretation of the "Holocaust".

This distinction between "horizontal" analysis and "vertical" analysis is a bit too abstract. When he analyzed the type of synthetic rubber that the Germans were trying to produce, when he taught us about polymerization and vulcanization, when he explained the combination of the butadiene and sodium in buna, was the author of that distinction then not in the "vertical" rather than the "horizontal"? Would it not be right to say that, in the whole scope of his book, which constitutes a global attack without equal, the author nonetheless conducts a series of particular inspections that may be characterized as "vertical"? Conversely, is the researcher who decides to approach the vast subject of the "Holocaust" from the angle of the gas chamber alone, before anything else, really working only in the "vertical"? Will he be merely the analyst of a particular aspect? Can he not too, in his own way, have a "horizontal" and comprehensive view of the "Holocaust"? If I judge by my own case, I became acquainted with our American's global approach (1976) only after having read Rassinier in the early sixties and having decided, considering the huge mass of the Great Lie, that I should attack it from its most vulnerable angle: that of the magical gas chamber. For me, *The Hoax* has not performed the role of an initiation; it has had but the value of a providential confirmation. In observing the colossus that is the Great Lie, I quickly noted that it had feet of clay and it was therefore on this weak point that I decided to concentrate my assaults. Assuredly, the spectator to this struggle who, for his part, has not seen the feet of clay will be surprised at my relentless landing of all my blows, as it were, at ground level. He will find me short-sighted. Nothing of the sort. I had indeed taken complete measure of the monster. Besides, how could its formidable dimensions have escaped me? In truth, discerning what I took to be its weak spot (those hazy gas

chambers), it was for that spot, to begin, that I saved my blows. He who confronts Achilles must, like Paris, aim for the heel.

But enough of these images and comparisons! Butz wanted to prove that "the unprecedented *crime*" (the genocide) imputed to the vanquished by the victor had not happened whereas other revisionists, choosing a different path, wanted to demonstrate that "the unprecedented *crime weapon*" (the gas chamber) had not existed. If that crime is imaginary, it follows that one need no longer even add that the *weapon* is imaginary as well. Conversely, if *that weapon* is imaginary, then so is *the crime*. The result is identical and only the methods used to attain it have been different.

Butz's mighty intelligence is perhaps too abstract. The only concentration camp he has ever visited is that of Dachau. On the subject of the alleged homicidal gas chamber there, he has written nearly nothing than that, in the opinion even of the accusers, that structure, "disguised as a 'shower room'", had not been completed and, consequently, had not been used.

This actual indifference towards certain material contingencies (not all!) was to be noted elsewhere. Among the essential arguments that may be brought forth to show that the Nazi gas chambers cannot have existed outside of the imagination, there is, it seems to me, the argument dealing with the existence - a quite real one - of the execution gas chambers in some American penitentiaries. It is enough to see an American gas chamber and to study how it works in order to realize that the supposed Nazi gas chambers and the way in which they supposedly worked are mere imagination. And Butz is American. How is it that he did not use this argument? As if it were not enough to refrain from examining any alleged "Nazi" gas chamber, why did he not inform himself about any of the gas chambers in his own country's prisons? Had he done so, he would immediately have realized how daunting a task it is to execute one prisoner with hydrogen cyanide gas (the active ingredient in the pesticide Zyklon B) without gassing oneself. He would have grasped that nothing is more dangerous than to enter an American gas chamber after an execution, and he would have seen that it is impossible to handle the gassed corpse without drastic precautions. He would have noted that only a sophisticated mechanism can prevent the worst from befalling the physician and his two aides, who, in rubber gloves and boots, and wearing masks fitted with special filters, will have to penetrate the gas chamber and handle the still dangerous corpse. He would have realized that the accounts telling of Sonderkommando members walking into the "Nazi" gas chambers to handle casually, without gas masks, hundreds or thousands of cyanide-infused corpses were grotesque. By the same token, Rudolf Höss' "confessions" to his warders would have collapsed and, along with them, a fair number of other "confessions," "testimonies," "memoirs," "items of evidence," and "trials": in short, the whole base of the Great Lie edifice would have disappeared.

Returning to the "Donation of Constantine", the "revisionists" in the style of Lorenzo Valla had thought it necessary to put forth a hundred arguments in order to expose the fraud. But one single argument would have sufficed, although so modest, so laughable, so basely material that one barely dares mention it: in effect, one little Roman coin was enough to prove that after Constantine the Roman Empire continued to have at its head other emperors and no Popes. In reality, heaps of coinage in the effigy of Constantine's true successors proved that the text of the famous donation, "discovered" in the Ninth century, could only be a fraud. The humblest coin collector held in his hands the proof, material and irrefutable, exposing the entire fraud. None of these coins bore the effigy of a Pope; all bore the effigy of an emperor. Similarly, nowadays, two eyes and a minimum of practical knowledge are enough to see that the alleged gas chamber to which, at Auschwitz, capital of the "Holocaust", tourists and pilgrims are led in droves, is nothing but a Potemkin gas chamber. As for the other alleged "Nazi" gas chambers, either they are no longer shown to visitors, or we are told that since they were left unfinished they were never used. No historian dares any longer produce a drawing, a model or any other representation of this diabolical weapon. Sometimes, Voltaire's *Candide* imagines that he sees, off in the distance, the nowhere-to-be-found gas chamber in question; he draws near; it disappears from view: it was only a mirage. The alleged "Nazi" gas chamber is, in a way, the constant no-show of Jewish historiography. I shall say then, to conclude, that Butz, not noticing the precious argument within arm's reach, makes me think in this case of a Lorenzo Valla who failed to see the Roman coin that he held in his hand, even though that coin enabled him to kill and even "overkill" the historical lie that he was seeking to combat.

The reader will know that these reservations do not in the least diminish my esteem for the work and for the man. Built as solid as a rock, the work will unquestionably outlive its author. Will it be what Thucydides called "an acquisition for ever" (*ktêma es aei*)? It would deserve to be such. In more than a quarter of a century no historian has ventured to refute it. In the endless flood of anti-revisionist publications, not one book, not one article offers a parry to the exceptional reference work that *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century* has proved to be for the study of historical revisionism.

Unhappily, the hoax that the revisionists have tackled still has some fine and wicked days ahead of it in the 21st century. It is difficult to see how a powerful brain, be it even that of the American Arthur R. Butz, could have done with so colossal an imposture as the alleged "Holocaust" of the Jews. Neither the will of scholars nor the quality of their work can prescribe the events that alone will determine the moment of this imposture's demise.

One may even wonder whether a belief of this kind will ever end. Its character is increasingly religious. The religion of the "Holocaust" or "Shoah" tends, amongst the Jews of today, to take over from the Torah and Talmud. It is holy. It serves God, Mammon and the Golden Calf, as well as, at the same time, the Jews' eternal anger and unquenchable thirst for vengeance. The consumer society and its quest for profit are ideally adapted to it. Neither that society nor that religion shows, for the time being, the least sign of weakening.

Twenty-six years. It will have taken twenty-six years (1976-2002) for *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century* to appear in French. And not for want of trying, over a quarter of a century, to make available to the French-reading public the masterly work of the American Arthur Robert Butz. Every time, a lack of money and of material means, to say nothing of the whims of the prevailing repression, frustrated those efforts. Today, at last, the work has come out for us in French, even though it still had to be published abroad. The new inquisition is here, peering from the battlements. "An unbearable Jewish thought police" (as the late Jewish intellectual Annie Kriegel called it) is on guard. Each year, with the appearance of new revisionist writings, it lengthens the lists of its *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*.

Historical revisionism is decidedly the great intellectual adventure of our time.

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